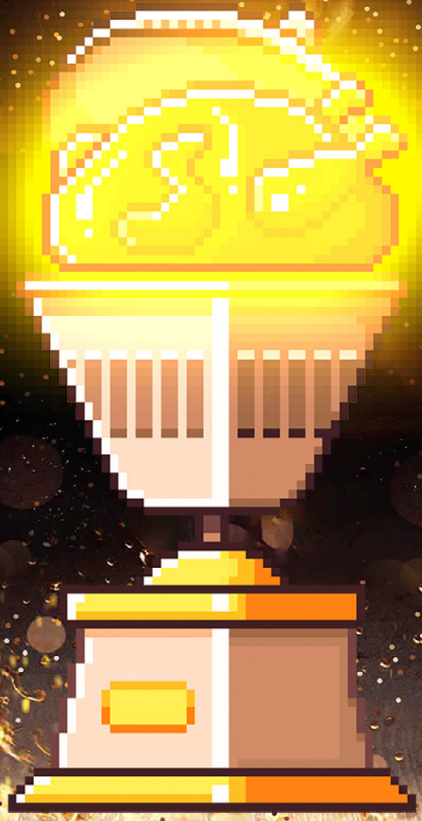
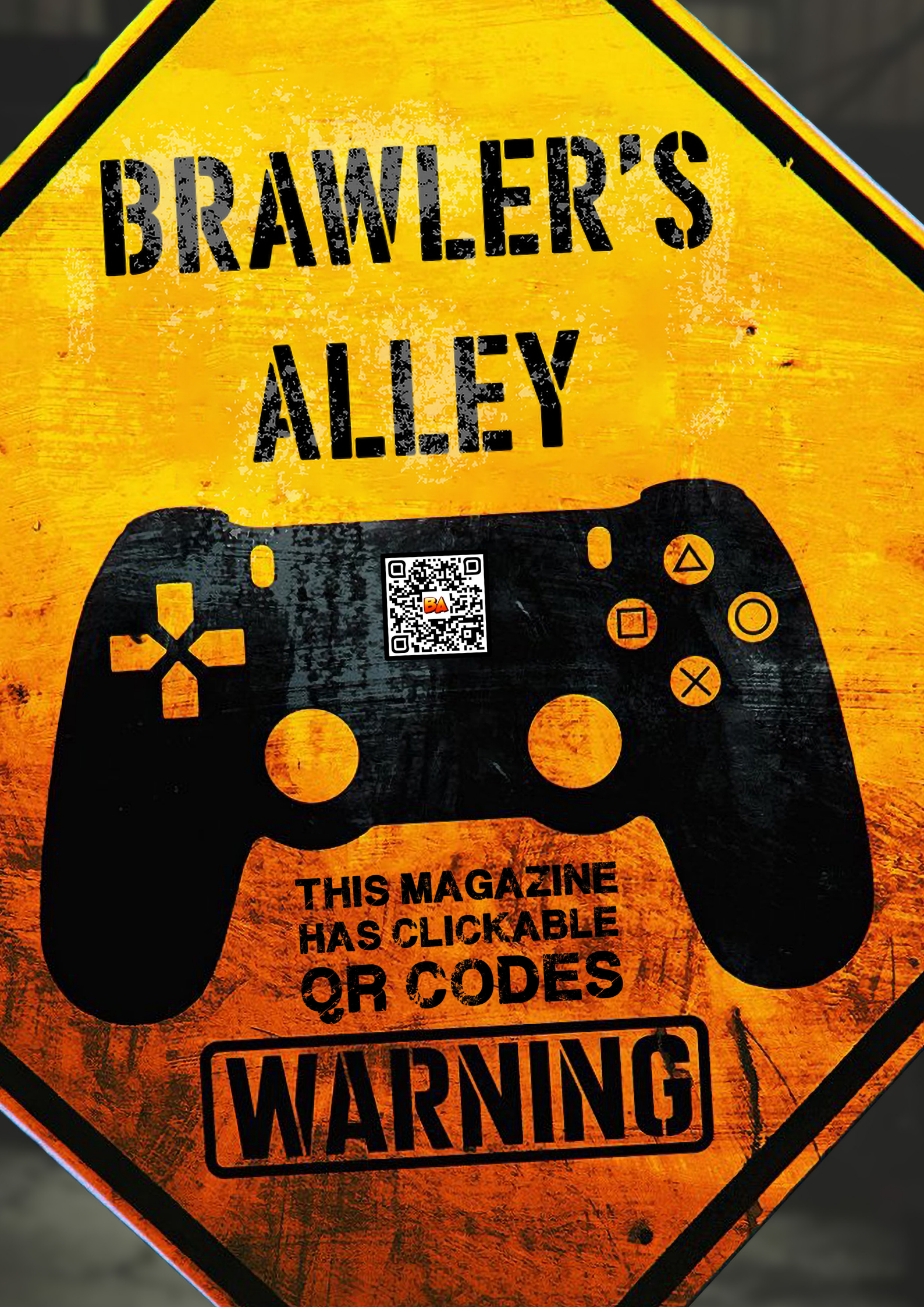
BRAWLER'S ALLEY

ISSUE 04 . JAN 23

THE GOLDEN CHICKEN AWARDS



2022


BRAWLER'S
ALLEY
THIS MAGAZINE
HAS CLICKABLE
QR CODES
WARNING

MAYHEM BRAWLER

An urban fantasy themed beat 'em up that brings back the 90s arcade vibe to present day. With comic book style art and kick-ass soundtracks, it offers an amazing experience that you can tackle solo or as co-op with friends while defining the next step in the story with your choices.









Grab your copy now on
RED ART GAMES

Available platforms

Mayhem Brawler © 2022 Hero Concept. All rights reserved.

HERO CONCEPT

EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor:
RICARDO SAVINO

Art Director:
KATIE CARVALHO

Design & Layout:
KATIE CARVALHO

Staff Writers:
RICARDO SAVINO

Proofreading:
GRAMMARLY

Ad Manager:
RICARDO SAVINO

Consultant:
SERKAN ÖZAY

SPECIAL THANKS

AWARDS JURY:
FACE(MPZ)
GOHBILLY
KOTIX
MR.DIN
OLDMAN BURLY
SCOTTIE J.(BAC)
SERKAN ÖZAY

CREDITS

RAWPIXEL.COM
UPKLYAK
PIKISUPERSTAR
DEVIANTART

CONTACT US:
brawlersalley@gmail.com

COPYRIGHT:
Brawler's Alley 2023 Reproduction in whole or in part without written consent is strictly prohibited.

GAMES OF THE YEAR

10 #1 - PGM Series: Rumble Dragon
11 #2 - River City Zero
12 #3 - An American Werewolf in L.A.
13 #4 - Dawn of the Monsters
14 #5 - Young Souls
15 #6 - Jitsu Squad
16 #7 - Maximus 2
17 #8 - The Last Friend
18 #9 - Contract Killer
19 #10 - Streets of Rage 4
20 #11 - Samurai Riot: Definitive Edition
21 #12 - Sifu
22 #13 - TMNT: Shredder's Revenge
23 #14 - Final Vendetta
24 #15 - River City Saga
25 #16 - Pulling no Punches
26 #17 - BVOVB
27 #18 - Brok: The Investigator
28 #19 - TMNT Collection
29 #20 - Midnight Fight Express
30 #21 - Last Beat Enhanced
31 #22 - Super Punch Patrol
32 #23 - Josh Journey
33 #24 - Bloody Paws
34 #25 - 99vidas
35 #26 - Cobra Kai 2
36 #27 - Shadow of the Guild
37 #28 - Fright Knight Legend
38 #29 - River City Girls 2
39 #30 - WM - A Tale of Cloud and Wind



Golden Chicken Awards

42 Best Graphics

43 Best O.S.T.

44 Best Story

45 Best Roster

46 Best Combat

47 Best New I.P.

48 Best Enemies

49 Best Value

50 Best Beat 'em Up

News 'n Views

Editor's Beats 06

Back Alley 51

Views from the Alley 52

Readers Views 53





Playing retro video games - by robtek

Editor's Beats

THE YEAR OF BEAT 'EM UPS

2022 was arguably the best year for beat 'em ups in nearly 30 years. The last year that genre broke the mark of 20 games in the span of 12 months was 1995, in the twilight of the genre's Golden years. Not only the quantity but the quality of the games we had this year was exceptional making this probably one of the best years ever for brawlers fans.

From early February to the end of December, we didn't have a single month without a solid release and in a lot of cases, more than one release. Heck, we even got two GOTY contenders released one day after the other. If this does not say a lot about 2022 I don't know what would.

Big companies, indie teams, and solo devs from all corners of the world released their games telling different stories, with different styles and reasons to fight. From Kaijus destroying cities to crocodiles solving crimes, from traditional beat 'em ups in crime-infested cities to innovative mixes that took beat 'em ups to places like point 'n click games and tower defense.

For all we know, we can say with confidence that beat 'em ups are back in town and they are here to stay. And be prepared, there's a lot more to come next year. Games that still have to be officially announced to games that were set to be released this year but were delayed for one reason or another. 2023 will be another year that surely will please beat 'em up fans. And we will be there, from day 1 with all of you.

But that's the future. For now, we will talk a little bit more about 2022 and reveal here our top picks for the year. The selection wasn't easy, there were a lot of games and a lot of great ones. We had to assemble a team of players and spend countless nights arguing about each category, each runner, and each winner.

The final result is, in my opinion, a fantastic list of games. We've tried to keep it as professional as possible, but it would be a lie if I said that I wasn't more than happy to see some personal favorites winning.

It was a fun edition to create and we sincerely hope you enjoy our picks for the best games this year. We will be back next year, from the beginning, to keep with our mission to bring to you, the best readers, and the best games.

Ricardo Savino



TAKING BEAT'EM UPS TO NEW HEIGHTS



THE FLYING KICK NETWORK

The Flying Kick Network is an independent gaming media specialized in beat ‘em ups from all eras. Follow us on both Twitter and Youtube to get the lastest news, the best previews and reviews for all things beat ‘em up. If you are a developer, talk to our team so we can help you promote your game on all social medias. At the Flying Kick Network, we got your back.

STEAM GAMES

Did You Know?

- Only 1 in 20 players actually writes a review.
- Reviews are crucial for the game success on Steam.
-If the game doesn't get at least 10 reviews,
Steam pretends it does not exist.
-You don't need to write a complete review,
just saying "It's good!" is more than enough.



So, don't waste any time, go to your Steam Library and review the games you love! That way, those games get more attention on Steam, sell more copies and the developers can continue to work on updates and new games.

#ReviewYourGames


Games
of the
Year
2022



1 - Pixel Game Maker Series: Rumble Dragon

The year of 2022 started a little slow with no games in January. But as soon as February started we have been granted with a retro inspired beat 'em up that, while not amazing when compared to the rest of the year, has a good nostalgia flavor to it. Released exclusively for the Nintendo Switch, Rumble Dragon is clearly inspired by the beat 'em ups from the old Game Boy, more specifically Double Dragon. Here you can choose one of two characters Alisa and Mark, and fight your way through 5 levels. The game can be beaten in under 40 minutes and you will unlock an enemy to play it after each time you beat the game. With a simple and satisfying combat system, Rumble Dragon won`t rock your world, but will surely bring some good moments of fun. The only downside of this game is the price, for 12 dollars you can get better games.



Technical Info	
Developer	Retsuzan
Publisher	Gotcha Gotcha Games
Release Date	02/10/2022
Players	2
Online	No
Available at	Switch
Price	11.99 USD









Technical Info	
Developer	Arc System Works
Publisher	Wayforward
Release Date	14/02/2022 (Switch) 21/09/2022 (Others)
Players	2
Online	No
Available at	PC, Playstation, Switch, Xbox
Price	14.99 USD











2 - River City Girls Zero

Released in 1994 in Japan under the name, Shin Nekketsu Koha: Kunio-Kun Tachi no Banka, and brought to the west for the first time it's release, River City Zero is part of an effort of Arc Systems to bring more of the famous series to the west. In this game, you will be following Kunio after being framed for a crime he didn't commit. This game is also the first time that Misako and Kyoko from River City Girls appeared. While the time wasn't the best friend of this game, it can be a good pick if you're a fan of the River City franchise. The game is a bit difficult for modern audiences, but it is possible to beat it with a little patience. The game also was overhauled with an anime intro and manga-like cutscenes, like in River City Girls, to tell the story.









3 - An American Werewolf in L.A.

This fast-paced single plane beat 'em up maybe is not the best game on this list but don't be fooled by the simplistic visuals. This is a very fast game that will demand from the player some very fast reflexes. The story is silly but fun enough. You are a werewolf that wants to become a famous surfer in California and, when leaving the town, your girlfriend decides to go with you, but the Sheriff and also her father, will never allow her to leave with a monster like you. Beat, jump and dodge your way to California in this fun and fast game.







Technical Info	
Developer	Playmedusa
Publisher	Aurita Games
Release Date	24/02/2022
Players	2
Online	No
Available at	Android, IOS, Switch
Price	4.99 USD









Technical Info	
Developer	13AM Games
Publisher	Wayforward
Release Date	01/03/2022 (Stadia) 15/03/2022 (Others)
Players	2
Online	No
Available at	PC, Playstation, Stadia, Switch, Xbox
Price	29.99 USD











4 - Dawn of the Monsters

Dawn of the Monsters was a breath of fresh air for the genre. Here you will be playing as a 40 meters tall kaijus, a giant battle mech, and even an Ultraman look alike. One of the main attractions of the game is the amazing story that will be very familiar to the fans of the tokusatsu genre. In Dawn of the Monsters, you will be part of the DAWN initiative, a task force created to stop a Kaiju invasion that is coming from a rift in the bottom of the ocean. With huge enemies to fight against, destructible environments, and a combat system able to rival some of the best fighting games around, Dawn of the Monsters is a game that can't be missed. Whether you're a fan of tokusatsu or a fan of beat 'em up in general, you must give Dawn of the Monsters a shot.





5 - Young Souls

Young Souls is a hack'n slash beat 'em up with some elements of RPG that will put you in the shoes of the twins Jenn and Tristan to help them find their missing foster father. The game is fairly big, with lots of items, weapons, and consumables to buy in the many shops around the game to help you out. The world of the game is divided in two: our world, where you can rest, shop, and upgrade your characters, and an alternate world ,where the fight will take place and, believe me, it won't be easy. The game can be pretty hard sometimes, but thanks to a very broad difficult settings you can make the adventure as hard or easy as you like.

RECOMMENDED

Technical Info	
Developer	1P2P Studios
Publisher	The Arcade Crew
Release Date	10/03/2022
Players	2
Online	No
Available at	PC, Playstation, Stadia, Switch, Xbox
Price	24.99 USD











Technical Info	
Developer	Tanuki Creative Studio
Publisher	Tanuki Creative Studio (PC) ININ (Consoles)
Release Date	29/03/2022 (Steam) 09/12/2022 (Others)
Players	4
Online	No
Available at	PC, Playstation, Switch, Xbox
Price	19.99 USD (PC) 29.99 USD (Consoles)











6 - Jitsu Squad

With a charming cast of characters, amazing graphics, and fluid animation, Jitsu Squad is a great beat 'em up experience. And don't let the cute graphics and lovely anthropomorphized animals fool you, this game is brutal and will take its toll on you. Jitsu Squad allows you to use and abuse its many mechanics, including a tag team mode, where you can deliver huge combos changing characters mid-fight to extend your attacks as long as you want. The game has 4 playable characters, plus one coming in a future update (by the time of writing), 8 amazing levels and a soundtrack that will pump adrenaline right into your brain. Jitsu Squad is a game you can't miss in your collection.









7 - Maximus 2

Mobile games are unquestionably a huge part of our gaming life nowadays, thousands of games are released every week and, in most cases, the quality and intentions of the game aren't exactly on par with what a console/PC player expects. Thankfully, that's not the case with Maximus 2. The Four Fats brought to the little screens an amazing console quality beat `em up which easily rival the best games around. With 8 Playable characters, 15 levels, interesting RPG elements, and levels that connect seamlessly with each other, Maximus 2 is a great game to have in your pocket! The best part here is that the game is free and the monetization is extremely fair with very few ads, a cheap premium fee, and coins (that you can use to buy gear and unlock skins) that won't break your bank.





Technical Info	
Developer	The Four Fats
Publisher	The Four Fats
Release Date	06/04/2022
Players	4
Online	Yes
Available at	Android, IOS
Price	Free (In-app purchases)









Technical Info	
Developer	The Stonebot Studio
Publisher	Skystone Games Inc.
Release Date	30/09/2021 (PC) 21/04/2022 (Others)
Players	2
Online	No
Available at	Linux, Mac, Playstation, Steam, Switch
Price	29.99 USD







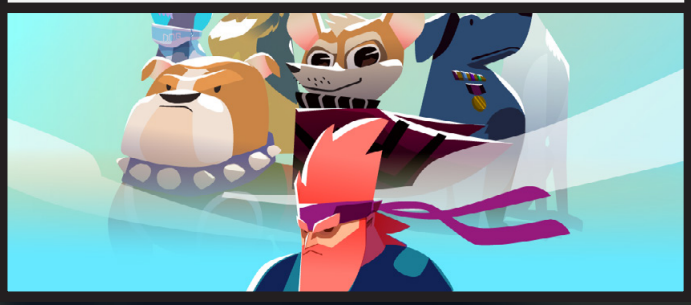




8 - The Last Friend

Do you like dogs? Do you like punching the face of people who mistreat them? So The Last Friend is the game for you. But wait, this is not your typical beat 'em up! The guys at Stonebot came up with a surprisingly fun mix of beat 'em up and tower defense. Here you will find your typical Tower Defense gameplay, where you prepare defenses to stop wave after wave of enemies. But while your defenses are working, you are free to walk around punching and kicking the enemies to help stop them. A creative, fun and very affordable game that becomes even better if you play locally with a friend. So don't waste any more time, lay down your defenses to protect your Van, and go out in a huge world rescuing the kidnapped doggos.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED





9 - Contract Killer

Have you ever thought about being a pencil? Yeah, that's a weird question. But what about an angry pencil trained in martial arts that will fight bad contracts that are binding the people of this world to a legal demise? That sounds more likely, right? With this unique premise and a very nice art style, Contract Killer will take you through three worlds and nine levels fighting against office utensils with up to three other friends. With an interesting and diverse cast of fighters, this game has way deeper combat than it looks, with lots of combos and juggling that will put your fingers to the test. So call your friends, sharpen your tips and prepare to have an extremely fun adventure in a wacky and colorful world.

RECOMMENDED

Contract Killer

Technical Info	
Developer	Paperboy Games
Publisher	Behemoth Interactive
Release Date	19/05/2022
Players	4
Online	No
Available at	Steam
Price	11.99 USD









Technical Info	
Developer	DotEmu, Lizard Cube, Guard Crush, Seven Studios
Publisher	Playdigious (Mobile) DotEmu (Others)
Release Date	30/04/2022 (Others) 24/05/2022 (Mobile)
Players	4
Online	Yes
Available at	Android, IOS, PC, Playstation, Switch, Xbox
Price	8.99 USD (Mobile) 24.99 USD (Others)







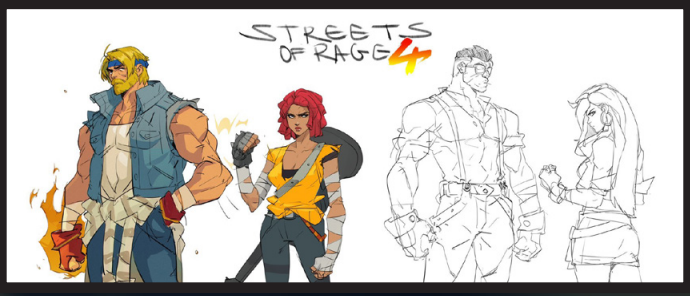




10 - Streets of Rage 4

The king is back! After almost two years after the original release, Streets of Rage 4, one of the most popular beat 'em ups ever, now fits right into your pocket. Released for mobile devices, thanks to the efforts of Playdigious, the game is the real deal. One-time purchase, with no ads, and no IAPs, just buy it and hit the town. The controls were masterfully translated for the small screen but if touch controls aren't your thing, you can play with a regular controller, making the experience exactly the same as on the big screen. You also can buy separately the Mr. X expansion and get all the cool extras it brings. An excellent port of an excellent game that is now the size of your pocket.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED



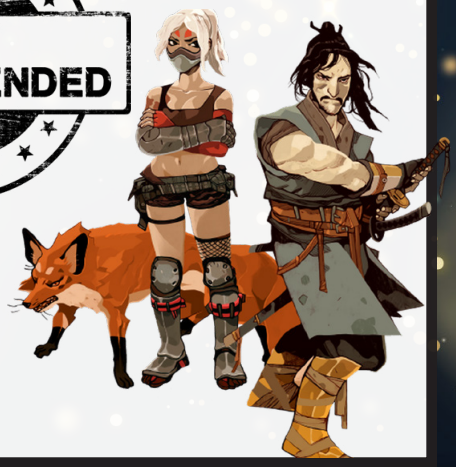


Technical Info	
Developer	Wako Factory
Publisher	Wako Factory
Release Date	24/05/2022 (PC) 01/06/2022 (Switch)
Players	2
Online	No
Available at	PC, Switch
Price	9.99 USD

II - Samurai Riot: Definitive Edition

Released in 2017 exclusively for PC, Samurai Riot makes a return this year with its Definitive Edition update and a release for the Nintendo Switch. The game has a great art style and good animations and there are even some different paths to take during your journey. The game also offers some light RPG elements allowing the player to update their characters. An interesting setting and good story could make this game a great pick for the year if the combat and gameplay were on par with the rest. Unfortunately, boring combat and uninspired enemies make your journey a boring slog and you will feel that the gameplay is getting in the way of the story, which is never a good thing for a beat 'em up.













Technical Info	
Developer	Sloclap
Publisher	Sloclap
Release Date	02/06/2022
Players	1
Online	No
Available at	PC, Playstation, Switch, Xbox
Price	39.99 USD











12 - Sifu

With one of the most realistic combats you will ever see in a game, Sifu is a rare type of game. Not only is it a great 3D beat 'em up, and probably the best, but it also has an intriguing story about revenge and the meaning of life. Sifu will punish you for every death aging your character and let his attacks more deadly but his body weakens due the age. Use your fists, use anything you can in the environment, or use the scenario itself to finish your enemies in the best John Woo style. This is a single-player affair, but one that time and time again you will come back to.



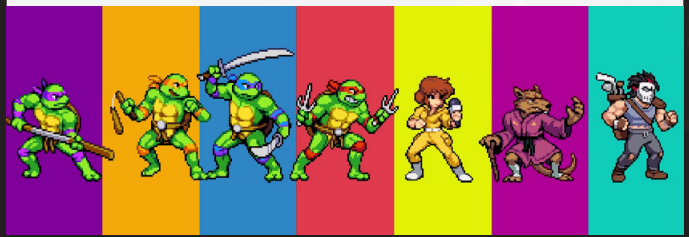


13 - TMNT: Shredder's Revenge

TMNT: Shredder's Revenge is a wonderful return to the origins of the classic beat 'em ups the heroes in the half shell were known for. Spanning 16 large and incredibly detailed stages themed after the episodic nature of the 1987 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles television show, Shredder's Revenge goes above and beyond to update the original formula in new and exciting ways that will please old school fans of the games as well as add depth for more seasoned and modern players. The titular turtles as well as two new playable companions jump into the fray solo or with up to 5 of their friends and utilize their whole arsenal of tools to battle the Foot across New York and beyond.







Technical Info	
Developer	Tribute Games
Publisher	Dotemu
Release Date	16/06/2022
Players	6
Online	Yes
Available at	Playstation, PC, Switch, Xbox
Price	24.99 USD









Technical Info	
Developer	Bitmap Bureau
Publisher	Numskull Games
Release Date	17/06/2022
Players	2
Online	No
Available at	PC, Playstation, Switch, Xbox
Price	24.99 USD











14 - Final Vendetta

Remember back in the arcades day when you were beaten constantly by the machine but you kept returning to it because the gameplay was way too good? Final Vendetta is a direct product of that time, from the gorgeous 2D graphics, and great renditions of iconic levels of the genre, to the difficulty. The game also offers easier modes for more accessible experiences, but if you enjoy a good and fair challenge, this is the game for you. Not to mention the soundtrack, which is something that will make you get up and dance even if you don't like electronic music.







15- River City Saga: Three Kingdoms

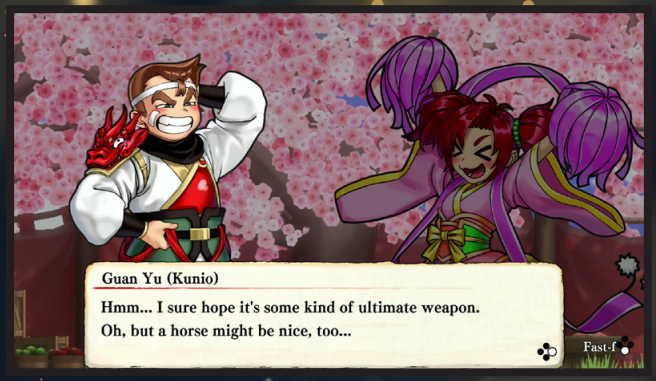
River City Saga will take the original Kunio-Kun series into new and exciting areas by remembering the past, quite literally! Battle with and against iconic figures across China from the ancient epic of the Romance of the Three Kingdoms through the lens of the Kunio franchise's familiar faces. With a frantic and interesting combat system at your back, you will battle hordes of enemies with an ever-evolving move set thanks to the series trademark RPG/Beat Em Up hybrid gameplay systems. Raise your stats, grow your army, and hoard as much loot as you can hold so that you can make your name in the history books in this large and epic tale.







Technical Info	
Developer	Arc System Works
Publisher	Arc System Works
Release Date	21/06/2022
Players	4
Online	Yes
Available at	PC, Playstation, Switch
Price	29.99 USD









Technical Info	
Developer	Braindead Broccoli
Publisher	Braindead Broccoli
Release Date	10/08/2022
Players	4
Online	No
Available at	PC
Price	24.99 USD











16 - Pulling No Punches

Ambiented in a fictional country, facing a fictional pandemic, with fictional people who don't comply with safety measures, this beat 'em up will put you in the shoes of 4 very angry girls who are fed up with all these people and decide to take the matter in their own hands. The combat is simple and very straight-forward and won't be long until you master the moves. Talking about it, the game has some small RPG elements where you level up to unlock new moves. Pretty simple, but effective. Gorgeous graphics, great animation, and excellent music give this game an excellent presentation and while it is very short, featuring only four levels, the characters are very unique, granting a lot of replayability.







17 - BVOVB

Bruising Vengeance of the Vintage Boxer is a game that you can't take too seriously. You play as John, a retired boxer that only cares for beer and his dog, Rottweiler Max. One day, someone kidnaps Max and now it is up to you to punch your way through 16 levels and save your good friend. The game has an amazing art style, it uses real old photos from real places as backgrounds and all the characters are also based on old pictures from the 1910s to the 30s. While the gameplay isn't fantastic, the game is pretty fun and it is worth your time, and being free, there isn't much to complain about here.





Technical Info	
Developer	rostok.itch.io
Publisher	rostok.itch.io
Release Date	11/08/2022
Players	1
Online	No
Available at	PC
Price	Free









Technical Info	
Developer	Cowcat Games
Publisher	Cowcat Games
Release Date	18/08/2022
Players	1
Online	No
Available at	PC
Price	19.99 USD











18 - Brok: The Investigator

2022 wasn't only a great year for beat 'em ups, but was also a great year for innovation in the genre. Brok brings together beat 'em up mechanics with the traditional Point 'n Click storytelling to create an extremely original game. Not only the puzzles and story are quite good, even when you're comparing them with other point 'n click games, but the combat is surprisingly solid and satisfying. One of the biggest surprises this year, Brok is a game that proves that good beat 'em up mechanics can be used in any genre and that beat 'em ups can also have amazing stories.





19 - TMNT: The Cowabunga Collection

This year was the year of the Turtles. Not only we got the excellent Shredder's Revenge but we also got this awesome collection that is, without a doubt, the dream of every Turtles fan. The collection comes with 13 games from the 8 and 16 bits era and a bunch of extras that is undoubtedly a great documentation of the history of the 4 green heroes. For the games you will get all beat 'em ups released in the above-mentioned era and, also, you still get the fighting games to boot. From the Game Boy to the Arcades, this is the most complete collection, not only for the Turtles' games but also for beat 'em ups ever, and a new standard for the genre.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

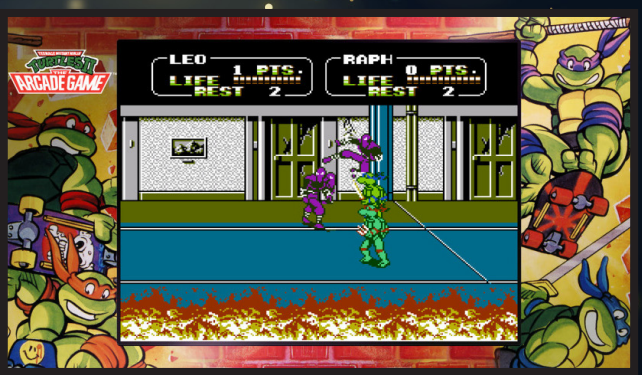


Technical Info	
Developer	Digital Eclipse
Publisher	Konami
Release Date	30/08/2022
Players	4
Online	Yes
Available at	PC, Playstation, Switch, Xbox
Price	39.99 USD









Technical Info	
Developer	Jacob Dzwinel
Publisher	Humble Games
Release Date	31/08/2022
Players	1
Online	Yes (Leaderboards)
Available at	PC, Playstation, Switch, Xbox
Price	19.99 USD





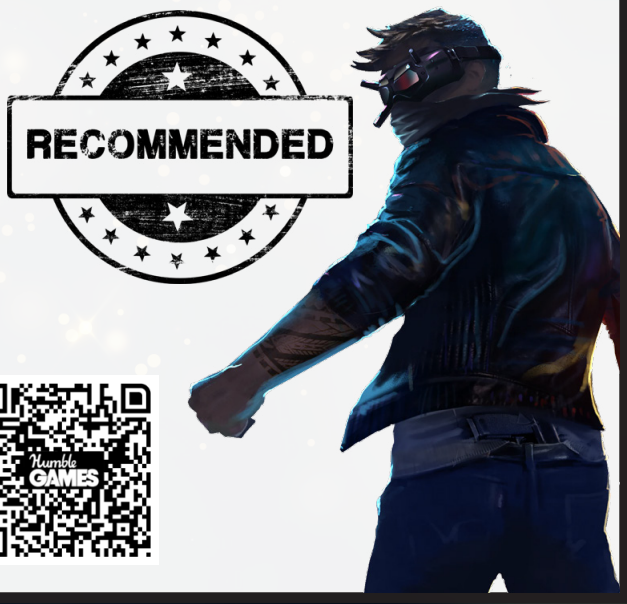






20 - Midnight Fight Express

It isn't every day we see an isometric beat 'em up and it isn't everyday we see a game so brutal as Midnight Fight Express. This game is the creation of Jacob Dzwinel and will put you in the shoes of Babyface, a sleeper agent controlled by an AI drone that wakes him up to prevent a massive criminal wave from taking over the city. Offering amazing free-form combat, with lots of combos, interactive environments, an incredible amount of weapons, some RPG elements, and an incredible amount of customizations, MFE was one of the most brutal and dynamic games last year. While the game is single-player only, it has plenty to do to fill up your hours unlocking all the extras.



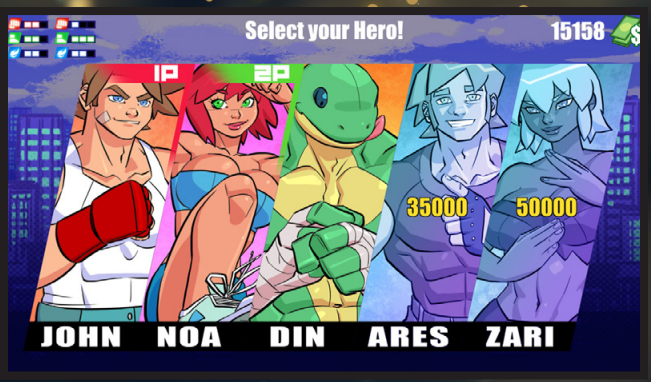


21 - Last Beat Enhanced

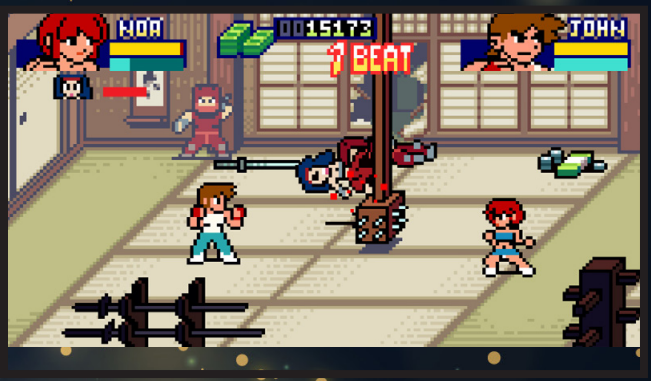
With a cute 8-bit aesthetic, Last Beat Enhanced is a great throwback to the past! The combat is simple, without too much flair, but a good cast of enemies and a nice combat loop make this game a good example of simplicity and substance. The nine levels aren't too long and you will be visiting beautifully crafted 8-bit scenarios while beating the heck out of the bad guys. The story is the traditional beat 'em up trope. A city in need of rescue, but who needs more motivation when the game is fun? You also get unlockable characters that you can "purchase" using the money you get in the game, increasing, even more, the replayability of the game.



Technical Info	
Developer	7 Raven Studios
Publisher	7 Raven Studios
Release Date	14/09/2022
Players	2
Online	No
Available at	Playstation, Switch, Xbox
Price	9.99 USD

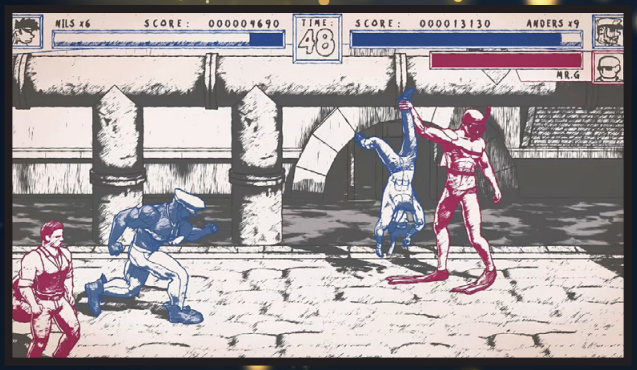


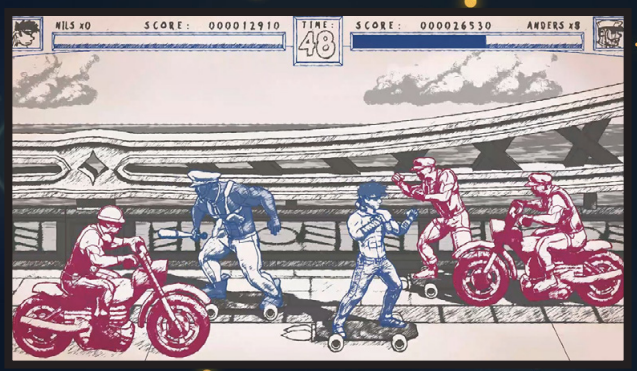


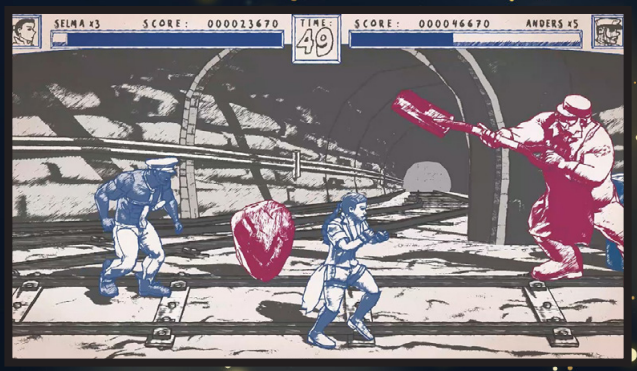


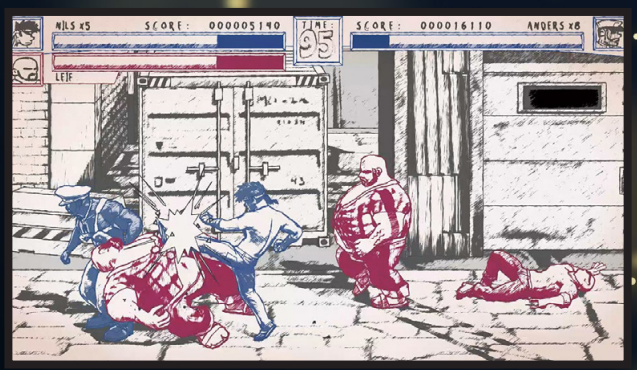


Technical Info	
Developer	Hörberg Productions
Publisher	Hörberg Productions
Release Date	17/09/2022 (Switch) 20/09/2022 (Steam)
Players	2
Online	No
Available at	PC, Switch
Price	4.99 USD (Switch) 5.99 USD (Steam)







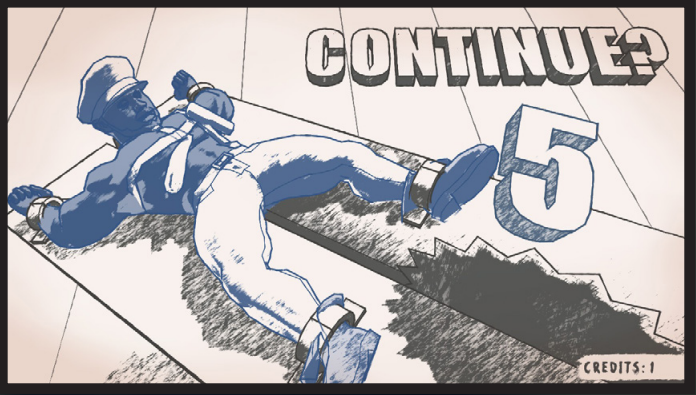




22 - Super Punch Patrol

Super Punch Patrol made its first debut on the Nintendo Switch in 2020 and after almost 2 years, it finally came to Steam. The game offers an interesting art style, with 3D models with a pen-like shader. The backgrounds are all made with black ink, the enemies in red and your character in blue, creating a striking visual that is very unique. The gameplay is pretty simple, without much flair to the combat, but it's fun enough to play to be worth a shot, especially if you play it with a friend.

RECOMMENDED





23 - Josh Journey

Coming from Brazil, Josh Journey is a quite psychedelic game. With an amazing art style, made all by hand, this game will take you to some of the craziest and most beautiful places you ever visit. Your enemies, things coming right from nightmares, will be relentless and will not rest until you are defeated and to avoid this, the game offers a fantastic tag team mechanic that will allow you to create the most insane combinations of combos. The game is hard and will demand some dedication from the player, but after getting the gist of the game, you will be in no time beating monsters left and right and saving the world while doing it.







Technical Info	
Developer	Província Studio
Publisher	Qubyte Interactive
Release Date	25/09/2022
Players	4
Online	No
Available at	PC, Playstation, Switch, Xbox
Price	13.99 USD









Technical Info	
Developer	Merso Entertainment
Publisher	Merso Entertainment
Release Date	14/10/2022
Players	1
Online	No
Available at	PC
Price	9.99 USD











24 - Bloody Paws

You are a werewolf and someone has kidnapped your "werewife". What would do? Obviously, you would use your acute sense of smell to track the kidnapper down and beat everyone in your way, of course. This fun little single plane beat `em up won't change your world but will surely grant you some fun, especially on a stormy night. This is a remake and expansion of a 90s game of the same name and it offers more levels, enemies, and powers to make your adventure even more fun. With good combat, nice music, and graphics, Bloody Paws may not be the most innovative game on this list but surely is a nice option if you`re looking for something a little different than most games released this year.









25 - 99Vidas

This game has been around for quite a while now but it finally made its debut on mobile. Offering tons of content with 11 playable characters, moves upgrades, and secret levels this is the perfect game to carry around in your pocket. The levels are a little big for mobile, since the game was originally created for consoles, but this does not detract from the fun. The game takes place in Brazil and you will visit a lot of places with that typical Brazilian flavor, with lots of colors and warmth that you can feel through your screen. The game is free to download, but offers some IAPs from coins to buy upgrades and extra lives. Unfortunately, there's no way to actually buy the game, but the monetization isn't aggressive.

RECOMMENDED



Technical Info	
Developer	Qubyte Interactive
Publisher	Qubyte Interactive
Release Date	06/11/2022 (mobile) 22/12/2016 (Steam) 11/02/2017 (Xbox) 17/08/2018 (Playstation) 27/11/2018 (Switch)
Players	2 (mobile) 4 (others)
Online	Yes
Available at	Android, IOS, Playstation, PC, Switch, Xbox
Price	Free (IAPs on mobile) 9.99 USD (others)







Technical Info	
Developer	Flux Game Studio
Publisher	GameMill Entertainment
Release Date	08/11/2022
Players	1 (2 in vs mode)
Online	Yes
Available at	PC, Playstation, Switch, Xbox
Price	49.99 USD



26 - Cobra Kai 2

Cobra Kai 2: Dojo Rising is the second game based on the successful Netflix series Cobra Kai. While the series is praised by critics and fans alike, the same cannot be said about the games. The first one, while it had its positive points, wasn't a great game, leaving much to be desired with clunky combat, a forgettable soundtrack, and graphics that didn't impress anyone. Somehow the sequel manages to be even worse. The game is now a 3D beat 'em up and everything is so broken that it is hard to point at it. Terrible combat, boring enemies, characters falling through the floor, A.I. stuck in place doing nothing... I could go all day listing the problems of this game, but all I can say is: avoid it like the plague. Actually, between this game and the plague, go for the plague.



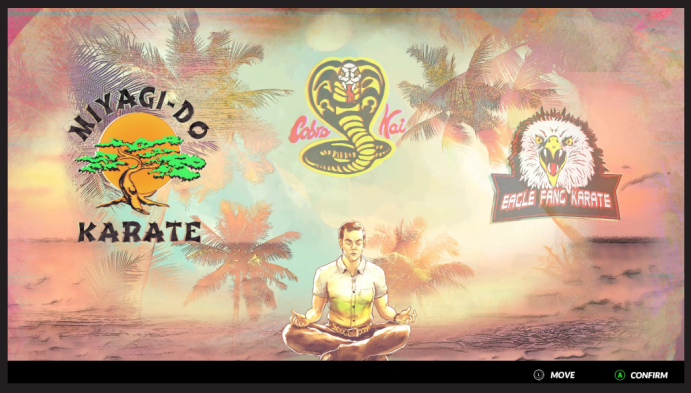


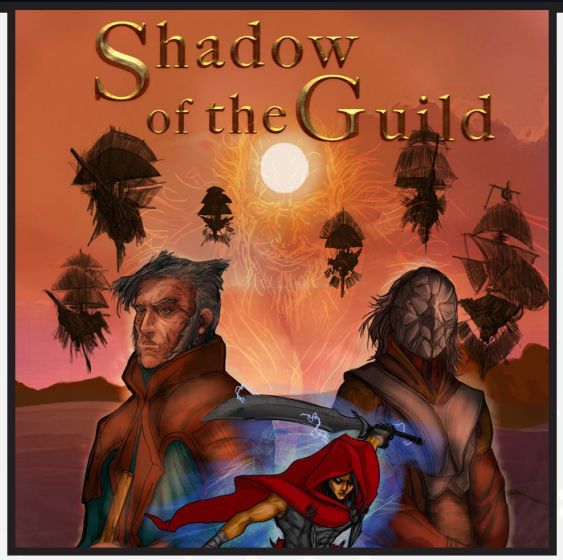












27 - Shadow of the Guild

In Shadow of the Guild you play as an Assassin that mixes the power of a mage and warrior. Use your strength to deliver powerful moves, cast spells to destroy your enemies, or mix both in powerful combos to annihilate them. The game also throws some RPG elements into the mix, allowing the player to upgrade the character using 3 different skill trees. While the graphics are not that great, the huge world, interesting enemies, and tons of side quests makes up for it.





Technical Info	
Developer	Guild Studios
Publisher	Bonus Stage Publishing
Release Date	10/11/2022
Players	1
Online	No
Available at	PC
Price	11.99 USD









Technical Info	
Developer	Lunar Ex Games
Publisher	Lunar Ex Games
Release Date	14/12/2022
Players	3
Online	Yes (Remote Play Together)
Available at	PC
Price	10.49 USD











28 - Fright Knight Legend

Fright Knight Legends is a game with good intentions. Unfortunately, good intentions aren't enough to make a good beat 'em up. You need a fun combat loop, good and diverse playable characters, and enemies that are fun to fight. All of this is lacking in this game. The combat is repetitive and boring, the enemies are uninspired and the graphics look cheap. The game was made with a commonly used unity template and little was done to make something different from other games on Steam using the same one.



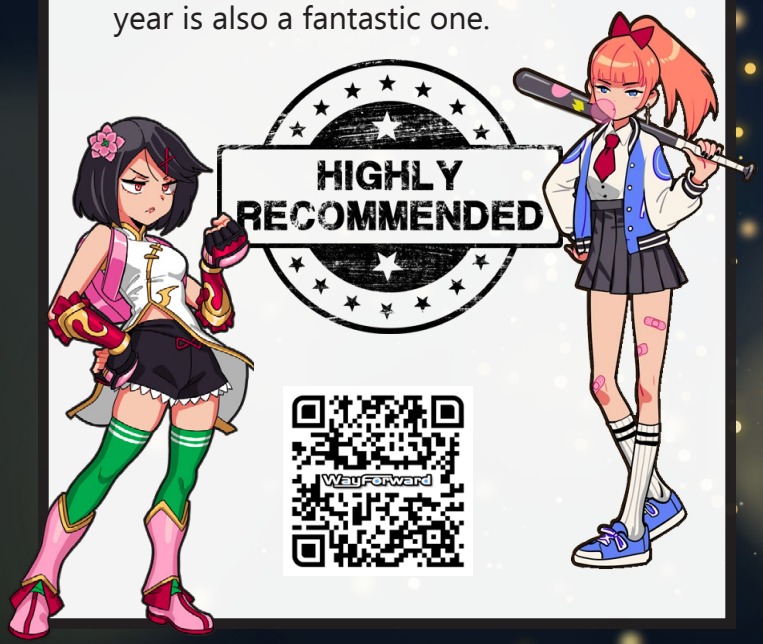




29 - River City Girls 2

Technical Info	
Developer	Arc System Works
Publisher	Wayforward
Release Date	15/12/2022
Players	4
Online	Yes
Available at	PC, Playstation, Switch, Xbox
Price	39.99 USD

The Girls are back!! After three years of waiting the girls are finally back to save River City once again in a much bigger and cooler adventure. And they are not alone, besides the boys, Riki and Kunio, they also got Marian, a former damsel in distress from the Double Dragon Series and Provie, the cool girl filled with attitude, from River City Underground. With more enemies, more moves, an amazing free-form combat system and a huge open world to explore, River City Girls 2 is a fantastic game that will put your skills to the test. The game also has amazing graphics, incredible animations, and a soundtrack once again signed by the talented, and pretty amazing, Megan McDufee. One of the last games of the year is also a fantastic one.





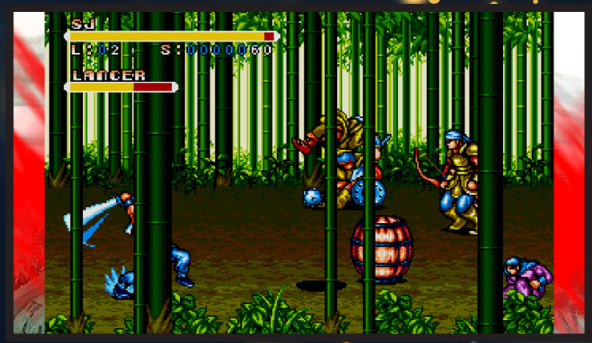






Technical Info	
Developer	Never Ending Soft
Publisher	King Tec Information Piko Interactive QuByte Interactive
Release Date	1996 (Mega Drive) 03/06/19 (Steam) 22/12/22 (Consoles)
Players	2
Online	No
Available at	PC, Playstation, Switch, Xbox
Price	4.99 USD











30 - Water Margin: A Tale of Clouds and Wind

Water Margin - A Tale of Cloud and Wind is arguably the oldest game released this year. Created in 1996 by a Taiwanese company, this bootleg game for the Mega Drive is pretty surprising. The game is obviously a copycat of Knights of the Round from Capcom, using even some of the sprites, although redrawn, of said game. Despite the shady origins, the game is actually pretty fun, with 3 playable characters, 7 levels, and a very interesting magic system. Not only is the game fun, but it's pretty cool to see more unknown games being released for modern audiences.

RECOMMENDED



HELVETII



THE GIFTS OF THE GODS AT YOUR COMMAND

Challenge the everchanging rot with 3 characters, use the gifts and powers bestowed by primal deities and show your mastery of combat by pummeling, juggling and slamming your enemies in a gorgeous 2d presentation.

Coming February 3rd

KWAKWA

Helvetti © 2023 Team Kwakwa. All Rights Reserved.

THE GOLDEN CHICKEN AWARDS



2022

BEST GRAPHICS

We all know what they say: "graphics don't make good games." What is true in a sense, after all, we have games with beautiful graphics and not-so-great gameplay that renders all the polygons, ray-tracing, and whatnot useless. But sure, if graphics didn't matter the slightest we would be all playing with stick figures like the Atari 2600 until the present day and be happy with it. It is obvious that graphics don't make good games, but it helps a lot in telling the story of the world and improving immersion in that world. Dismissing graphics is dismissing all the paths the industry trailed in these more than 40 years of evolution.

Nominees:











Winner:



This is probably not a surprise for many of you. Tribute Games did a spectacular job with this game, bringing all the feeling from the 80s cartoon to a beat 'em up game. Colorful, and extremely well-animated, Shredder's Revenge is not only a gorgeous game but is a trip down memory lane where we were all kids, sitting in front of our CRTs, waiting for the green heroes to save our Saturday mornings.






BEST ORIGINAL SOUND TRACK

If there's one thing everybody agrees on, including science, is that music can change your life. And if it can improve someone's life, what can you say about someone's game? Music is the soul of any beat 'em up game. That's why, in the opinion of this magazine, the Original Sound Track is the second most important thing a beat 'em up can have and without it, no matter how good your combat is, it will feel incomplete. After all, beating bad guys always begs for a good jam. 2022 presented us with some amazing OSTs, and some of them were high above what we are used to listening to in games laying out some new grounds for the future of the genre.

Nominees:











Winner:



From the splash screen to the end credits the OST of Final Vendetta is pure gold. The authors, Feature Cast and Utah Saints did an amazing job bringing some of the best music we ever heard in a game. With more than 20 songs in this game, you will have enough to listen to and dance while playing this game, or simply, listen in your home or car. It was a superb achievement from the guys at Bitmap Bureau and one that we surely want to see repeated.







BEST STORY

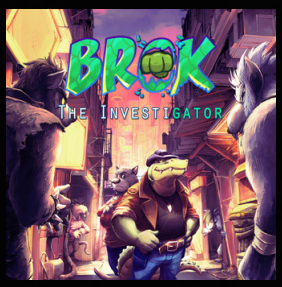
Beat 'em ups aren't really famous for its complex story and rich lore. Usually, all we get is a quick-cut scene telling you that the girl was kidnapped or the town is under siege by a gang of goons. But that doesn't mean that there's no place for a rich and detailed story in games like this and, this year, we had a lot of games that proved that story can be an important part of these games as much as combat. Stories motivate you, show you a brand new world and make you care about the characters you are controlling or interacting with. Having a good story won't stop the action of your beat 'em up, it will expand it.

Nominees:











Winner:



Brok is an amazing game. Not only was it the first beat 'em up to mix click and point mechanics, but is also the first brawler to have a dense and rich story that can easily be the highest point of the game. And not only is the story amazing, but the voice acting, especially from the main character, is outstanding. You can play Brok for the excellent combat and very well-made graphics, but it is the story, above all else, that will stick with you for a long time.







BEST ROSTER

They say variety is the spice of life and, well, this is absolutely true and is also applicable to the beat 'em ups. There's nothing better than a good and varied roster in a game where you can pick and choose a character that fits right in your style. Fast, strong, high-technique, grapplers, there are tons of styles and we all want a roster with characters that fulfill this desire. And only that, but a good roster can also offer the player the opportunity to find a new character, sometimes just for its design, and learn a new way or style to play. A good roster is halfway to a great game.

Nominees:











Winner:



With an amazing roster of 6 characters, with the most varied playstyle possible, RCG2 is our pick for the best roster. Not only can you play with the 4 characters from the original game but you also can play with Provie, from River City Ransom: Underground and, probably the biggest surprise, Marian, from the Double Dragon series. But that does not mean much if all the characters weren't different enough from each other and surely, they are.






BEST COMBAT

Finally, the (garbage bin) meat of every beat 'em up. Undoubtedly the most important part of any game from this genre, combat is what makes or breaks your game. It doesn't matter if your graphics are incredible, your roster is varied or if your soundtrack is composed by Mozart, if your combat isn't spot on, everything else is useless. Having good combat is what makes players go back to the game even after finishing it, to master and improve and, most importantly, have fun. This year was not easy to pick a winner because we had so many games with so many styles of combat that our wish was to give more than one award but, in the wise words of Connor MacLeod: There can only be one.

Nominees:











Winner:



Sifu was a breath of fresh air when it came to combat. A fast-paced, based-on-real combat game, that a lot of us wished for a beat 'em up. The realism of the combat, the brutality of your moves, and the speed at which the tides can change during your gameplay sessions, all of this made Sifu a great game that only improved with time with lots of modes being released as updates. Sifu is a game that has already made history and having the best combat of 2022 just confirms that.






BEST NEW I. P.

Introducing a new IP, especially in beat 'em ups, is never easy. This is a genre of all-time classics and a new IP will always be scrutinized, measured, and compared against them. Being compared with games like Streets of Rage 2, Final Fight, Double Dragon, and many others can be a daunting perspective for a developer. It is pretty difficult to create and release a game in the wild and, marketing it afterward, can be very scary. But, developers are a brave breed and have no fear of trying. 2022 was a year with lots of new IPs and we hope to see them becoming their own franchise in the near future.

Nominees:











Winner:



13AM Games did what, inexplicably, nobody did before. They picked up one of the most prolific genres in Japan and made it into a beat 'em up. Sure, we had some games with Kaijus in the past, but nothing like this. Great story, great characters, and great combat, Dawn of the Monster is not only the game we wanted to see but is also a game we want to keep seeing in the future!






BEST ENEMIES

What would be the point to have a great game, with great graphics, OST, and even moves aplenty, if the enemies aren't up to the challenge? A good part of what makes a great beat 'em up is how your enemies will force you to adapt your playstyle. It forces you to think fast, to react in milliseconds and makes you learn the ins and outs of the game. A good AI and a good variety of enemies are what make this genre so cool to play since you may never know what is coming next and how you will have to adapt to it. A great selection of enemies is the soul of a beat 'em up.

Nominees:











Winner:



Fighting Kaijus never gets old, but fighting hordes after hordes of the most varied and crazy monsters you ever see is eternal! Dawn of the Monster put aside the traditional thugs and bad guys to present us with an amazing selection of enemies. Not only they are varied enough, but they also are smart enough to trick you into their traps and surround you pretty, pretty fast. Creative, fun, challenging, and smart, there's no doubt that Dawn of the Monster has an amazing and unique cast of enemies.






BEST VALUE

2022 was a year filled with games. It was also a year when our pockets weren't as filled as we like. With so many games, it is hard to make sure what game really worth your hard-earned cash. Value can be hard to pinpoint, after all, games are a subjective affair, and what has worth for some, can be worthless for others. But there's one thing that everybody can agree on: The price must match the content. It doesn't matter if the game costs 70 bucks or 99 cents, if the content isn't there, your money was wasted. We, last year, had a lot of games filled with good content with the most varied tag prices, and one of them, beat all the others easily!

Nominees:











Winner:



Maximus 2 is the complete package. 8 great characters to choose from, 15 levels thanks to an expansion, survival mode, horde attack mode, local multiplayer for up to 4 people, online multiplayer, private rooms, lobbies by region, and, of course, the game is amazing. The price? Absolutely free. Although the game offers in-app purchases, you don't need to spend a dime to enjoy the game in its full form. The Four Fats did an amazing job, not only creating this game but also making it available to every person in this world.






BEST BEAT 'EM UP

What is needed to be the best beat 'em up in a year? Great combat? A great soundtrack? Good enemies? Actually, as you may suspect, is the combination of all these factors. It is a hard balance between creativity and commonplace where a player can be surprised by the challenge the developers created and still feel at home with the game. It is a hard task that, while some of the games this year nailed without problems, only one really surprised us all here at the Alley. And honestly, this is a monstrous game.

Nominees:











Winner:



It is not hard to see why we picked Dawn of the Monsters. As we said before, the game is extremely unique. Its theme, its characters, and the story are something incredibly new for the genre and something that we would love to see more in the future. Not to mention the combat, which is easily one of the best we ever saw, filled with powerful combos and moves that are very similar to fighting games. Dawn of the Monster is not only a great game, but is truly the Best Beat 'em Up of 2022!







A Very Special
Thanks to our
Supporters!
Binho
Wesley Paugh
Piotr Borecki



Two people playing video game - Photo by RODNAE Productions

ON THE GO

2022

The year was jam-packed with great releases for all systems, including the, not so much loved by gamers, mobile devices. Like it or not, mobile gaming is here to stay and, despite having a lot of terrible games filled with Gatcha mechanics trying to get your money, there are a few which was made with real passion. Some of them are ports of console or PC games, and some are original games, but one thing is for sure, we had a bunch of good games this year.

The year started with Maximus 2, a game we can't praise enough, followed by an incredible port of Streets of Rage 4, plus the Mr. X expansion and, in December, we got 99Vidas, a very entertaining game. While it was not by a long shot a great number of games, they were very solid releases, with diverse styles of gameplay and content.

2023

And 2023 doesn't look bad either. At the beginning of this year, we received, although exclusive for Netflix subscribers, TMNT: Shredder's Revenge, one of the best games of the last year. We can only hope that other games also come to mobile, after all, even if it isn't our favorite platform, if more people get to know beat 'em ups games, this writer will be very happy.









BEAT 'EM UPS ARE BACK AND WE HAVE A MAGAZINE TO PROVE IT!

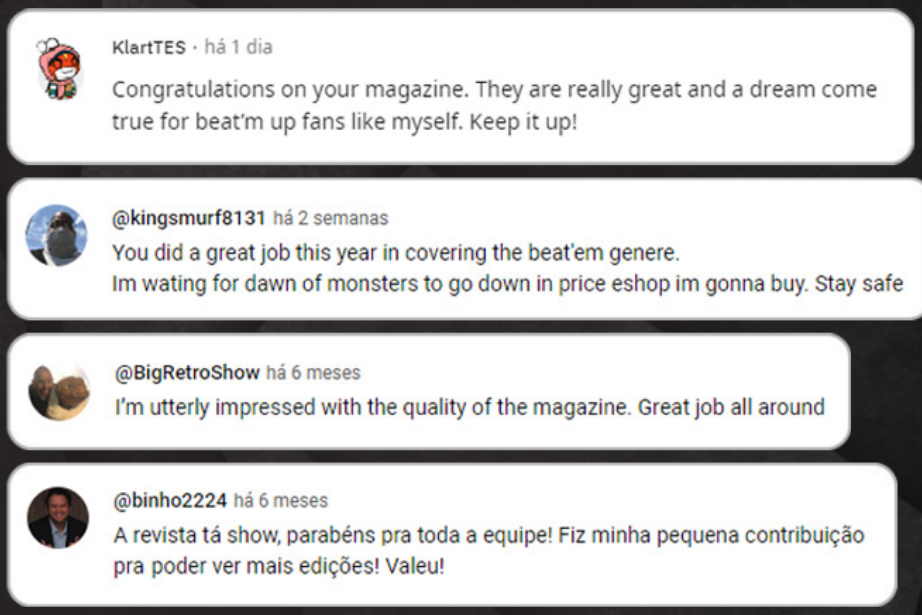
TALK to your PLAYERS

Put your game out in the world.
Advertise on the first and only specialized magazine of the genre!



Don`t have an ad ready to publish?
Send us your assets and we'll do the rest: brawlersalley@gmail.com

Readers Views



Brawler's Alley is an independent, free and dedicated beat 'em up magazine.

Comment on our social medias, subscribe, like and share our content or make a donation on our website to help us grow and keep up with the good work.

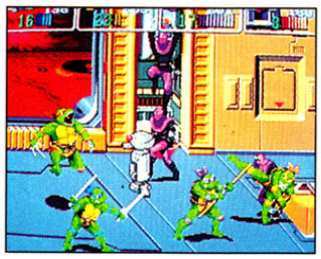
We thank you all for your support!



The Turtles Are In For The Times Of Their Lives.

Cowabunga, courageous ninja dudes, it's TMNT®IV–Turtles In Time™ for Super NES. The fab four are in a time warped tail spin direct from the second arcade game. And there's a most bodacious bonus. Now you can also go shell-to-shell in a tasty turtle bash-o-rama mode and find out who's the most radical reptile of them all.

Take on 10 explosive levels featuring humungoso 3D graphics. You've got nine Turtle attack moves to use including the Catapult, Cannon Ball and Bulldozer. This dizzying trek through time takes you A.D., B.C. and A.D. again. You'll be hurled through time so much you may hurl yourself. But don't forget your mission: to find April O'Neil (schwing!) and the stolen Statue of Liberty before Shredder makes a mega size lawn ornament out of her. So achieve total turtlosity and go for it!





KONAMI®

◀Check it out, dudes. Arcade screenage on the left, Super NES screenage on the right. They're, like, turtlely the same! Aren't those studs at Konami awesome?



▼ Shredder's Matrix Translocation Beam sends you all over history's half acre, including the swashbuckling days of pirates. In this case, it's Bebop and Rocksteady wearing the tights and earrings.

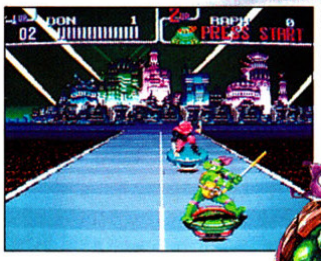


◀ Warp back to the prehistoric age where Foot Soldiers fly Air Pterodactyl and drive Tyrannosaurus convertibles.





▼ Become a gnarly neon nightrider in the year 2020 and do some heavy head bang with Krang.





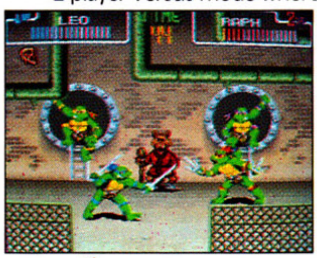






◀ Fight for your hide on a treacherous 19th Century train ride through the wild west. Deep six Leatherhead and maybe you can make a saddle out of his face.

▼ Bruise some shells and some egos in the 2 player Versus mode where best-of-three round slug fests prove for the first time ever who's the top Turtle.





Konami Game Hint and Tip Line: 1-900-896-HINT (4468)

70¢ per minute charge. Minors must have parental permission before calling. Touchtone phone required.

Konami® is a registered trademark of Konami Co., Ltd. Turtles In Time™ is a trademark of Konami, Inc. Nintendo® Super Nintendo Entertainment System® and Super NES™ are trademarks of Nintendo of America Inc. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles® and the distinctive likeness thereof are registered trademarks and copyright 1991 by Mirage Studios, exclusively licensed Surge Licensing, Inc. ©1992 Konami. All Rights Reserved.

CIRCLE #146 ON READER SERVICE CARD.



ARE YOU GETTING ALL THE GAME TITLES YOU'RE ENTITLED TO?

Nintendo®